

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY
STATEMENT OF
REAR ADMIRAL JAMES W. UNDERWOOD
ON
SEAPORT SECURITY
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
U.S. SENATE
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Good morning, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today to discuss the importance of transportation security in our ports and its nexus toward strengthening national security.

As National Security Advisor to the Secretary of Transportation, my job is to focus attention on land, sea and air transportation security issues that protect the safety of the traveling public, ensure the movement of the nation's cargo, and preserve the transportation system's critical infrastructure. Using a nautical analogy, the Office of Intelligence and Security (OIS) serves as the Secretary's lookout, scanning the horizon for the first signs of danger, and then recommending alternatives for safe passage in advance of reaching *extremis*. Within the Department, OIS attempts to identify physical and cyber vulnerabilities of the Nation's transportation system, while working to protect it from the asymmetric threats of criminals, terrorists and rogue states bent on attacking Americans here at home.

The Aviation Security Improvement Act of 1990 created the Office of Intelligence and Security to protect the traveling public from terrorist incidents such as the December

1988 bombing of Pan AM 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. In the years following the enactment of this legislation, increased and publicized security measures, employed technologies, training and awareness have bolstered the public's confidence to fly. And as the capacity of the aviation industry in the United States grew during this period, security measures on aircraft and within airport terminals thankfully kept pace.

This is not the case with maritime port security. The release of the Report of the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports signaled the need for a comparable and sustained effort focused on improving maritime transportation security - especially our strategic and economically vital ports. As you are aware, this report prescribes numerous recommendations directed at preventing both crime and terrorism. Whether it is crime, involving cargo theft and trade fraud, or terrorism occurring either within the port or via weapons of mass destruction transshipped to anywhere in the United States, the Report's recommendations provide a firm foundation to improve maritime security and safety. And perhaps most importantly, the Report sets the groundwork by which multi-jurisdictional and authoritative government and law enforcement bodies and industry may fully cooperate with one another.

The Office of the Secretary has taken the lead in bringing together various groups to examine threats to the transportation system infrastructure. We are learning from each other. FAA's experience in improving security at airports offers valuable lessons for seaport security. For example, they have already developed a system for checking the criminal history of employees with access to sensitive areas. This is one of the

recommended measures in the report of the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U. S. Seaports for which the aviation security model may be applicable. Our Nation's maritime transportation system has been designated as a critical infrastructure, essential to both national security as well as economic security. As our transportation systems become increasingly more complex, extensive, and interdependent, America's need to move people and cargo quickly and efficiently depends on a transportation infrastructure that will function continuously, without serious interruption or delays. Challenging the reliability of this system is an evolving set of asymmetric threats and physical and electronic vulnerabilities yet to be fully assessed. We must protect against two broad types of threats: 1) those that target our transportation system to inflict serious personal injury or serious disruption, and 2) those that use our transportation system as a means to engage in or perpetrate criminal and hostile acts.

It is not necessary to live near or work in a port to be impacted by the threats of port crime. Ships, rail, trucks and air transportation modes are linked and move cargo thousands of miles across the United States. A container loaded overseas may reach its mid-western destination without ever being opened for inspection. In light of the recent outbreak of Hoof and Mouth Disease in the United Kingdom and Europe, national border security was increased to thwart the introduction of this disease. However, I am concerned that border security controls and voluntary reporting would not be enough to stop someone *intent* on causing severe harm, by way of our seaports, to the United States.

Several recent studies and threat assessments have underscored the persistent nature of the threats that require U. S. attention as they relate to port security:

* The December 2000 International Crime Threat Assessment indicates that the threat to the US from international crime continues to grow as criminals and terrorists exploit the globalization of trade and finance and rapid changes in technology. It further states that drug trafficking, illegal migration, and environmental crimes as well as international terrorism using both sophisticated and crude weapons will persist.

* The CIA's Global Trends 2015 Report identifies the propensity for present and potential adversaries to avoid U.S. military strengths and exploit perceived national weaknesses. Furthermore, this report notes that such asymmetric opportunism will "become the dominant characteristic of most threats to the US homeland." A balanced national security strategy requires an effective and comprehensive action plan that addresses such traditional "low technology" threats.

Prudent and practical measures must be taken to fundamentally improve our Nation's security within our unprotected ports and maritime approaches. Our attention could not be more appropriate given the concern expressed by President Bush in his 1999 speech at the Citadel, in which he noted: "weapons can be delivered, not just by ballistic missiles, but by everything from airplanes to cruise missiles, from shipping containers to suitcases." The risk of a weapon of mass destruction being deployed against the United States by such low-tech means as a shipping container delivered to a seaport presents a difficult challenge, but one the United States cannot afford to ignore.

The Office of Intelligence and Security supports the Secretary's effort to coordinate transportation security measures throughout the Department's operating administrations and other federal, state and local agencies. The Department of Transportation, through the Office of Intelligence and Security has served the transportation industry as a source for intelligence and threat dissemination on terrorism. Furthering the security of our ports requires the involvement of the Office of the Secretary, the U. S. Coast Guard and the Maritime Administration, and other government law enforcement agencies at all levels, and *especially* industry.

Maritime transportation is an integral component of our Nation's economic vitality, and one of our greatest strengths supporting free markets, free trade and personal freedoms. To advance the safety and security of our ports and waterways requires us to be proactive in our approach, collaborative in our work with federal, state, local authorities and the private sector, and resolute in our determination to diminish the threat of terrorism and crime within the critical maritime infrastructure.